

CLAIMS

1. A supply chain data management system comprising:

5 a first trading entity coupled to be in communication with a server via a communications network, said first trading entity registered with said server as a participant of said system;

at least one second trading entity coupled to be in communication with said server via said communications network, said at least one second trading entity registered by said first trading entity as a trading partner of said first trading entity;

10 a profile associated with each said trading entity, said profile specifying supply chain data to be communicated to and/or from one or more of said trading entities, each profile accessible by said server;

15 wherein, said server automatically requests supply chain data from at least one of said trading entities and in response to receiving said requested supply chain data, said server communicates data related to said supply chain data to one or more other trading entities in accordance with their profile.

- 20 2. The system of claim 1, wherein each profile for each said second trading entity registered as a trading partner of said first trading entity is created by said first trading entity.

- 25 3. The system of claim 1, wherein said server informs said second trading entity via said communications network that they have been registered by said first trading entity following registration of said second trading

entity by said first trading entity.

4. The system of claim 1, wherein each profile specifies a format of the supply chain data to be communicated to and/or from said trading entity.

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5. The system of claim 1, wherein a predetermined time limit for responding to said request for supply chain data is associated with said request, after the expiry of which, if said server has not received said requested supply chain data, a reminder is sent by said server to said trading entity from which said supply chain data was requested.

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6. The system of claim 1, wherein said data related to said supply chain data comprises a notification that supply chain data is available via said communications network, the availability of said data to said one or more of said second trading entities being specified by said first trading entity in said profile of said second trading entities.

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7. The system of claim 1, wherein said supply chain data is communicated by one or more of the following: email, electronic data interchange (EDI), facsimile.

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8. The system of claim 1, wherein said supply chain data is one or more of the following: estimated time of manufacture (ETM), arrival time and/or date (ARR), departure time and/or date (DEP), origin, destination, trading participant identity, mode of supply, customs clearance details

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(CCD), purchase order (PO), estimated time of supply (ETS), packing list (PL), shipper's letter of instruction (SLI), origin pick up details (OPU), house airway bill (HAWB), bill of lading (BOL), master airway bill (MAWB), ocean bill of lading (OBL), manifest details, freight and value (F/V) information, invoice, commercial invoice (CI), receipt of shipment (WR).

9. The system of claim 1, wherein said server is an application server.

10. A method of managing supply chain data in a system comprising a plurality of trading entities coupled to be in communication with a server via a communications network, said method including the steps of:

registering with said server at least one second trading entity as a trading partner of a first trading entity,

creating a profile associated with each said trading entity, each said profile specifying supply chain data to be communicated to and/or from one or more of said trading entities, each profile accessible by said server;

automatically requesting supply chain data from at least one of said trading entities; and

in response to said server receiving said requested supply chain data, communicating data related to said supply chain data to one or more other of said trading entities in accordance with their profile.

11. The method of claim 10, further including the step of specifying a format

In which each trading entity receives said data related to said supply chain.

5 12. The method of claim 10, further including the step of said server informing said second trading entity via said communications network that they have been registered as a trading partner of said first trading entity by said first trading entity.

10 13. The method of claim 10, further including the steps of:
specifying a predetermined time limit for responding to said request for supply chain data; and
15 sending a reminder from said server to said trading entity from which said supply chain data was requested if said server has not received said requested supply chain data after the expiry of said time limit.

20 14. The method of claim 10, further including the step of said first trading entity specifying a plurality of said second trading entities sufficient to establish a complete supply chain.

25 15. An apparatus for managing supply chain data in a supply chain data management system comprising a plurality of trading entities coupled to be in communication with said apparatus via a communications network, said apparatus comprising:
storage means for:

a) registering a first trading entity as a participant of said system;

b) registering at least one second trading entity as a trading partner of said first trading entity;

5 c) storing a profile associated with each said trading entity, said profile specifying supply chain data to be communicated to and/or from one or more of said trading entities;

10 wherein, said apparatus automatically requests supply chain data from at least one of said trading entities and in response to receiving said requested supply chain data, said apparatus communicates data related to said supply chain data to one or more other of said trading entities in accordance with their profile.

15 16. The apparatus of claim 15, wherein each profile specifies a format of the supply chain data to be communicated to and/or from said trading entity.

20 17. The apparatus of claim 15, wherein said supply chain data is one or more of the following: estimated time of manufacture (ETM), arrival time and/or date (ARR), departure time and/or date (DEP), customs clearance details (CCD), purchase order (PO), estimated time of supply (ETS), packing list (PL), shipper's letter of instruction (SLI), origin pick up details (OPU), house airway bill (HAWB), bill of lading (BOL), master airway bill (MAWB), ocean bill of lading (OBL), manifest details, freight and value (F/V) information, invoice, commercial invoice (CI), receipt of shipment (WR).